

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SWF-01 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0044

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 3297

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ECIN, EEC, UK, DA

SUBJECT: DANES TO OPPOSE DIRECT EC PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS BUT
SUPPORT REDUCED UK BUDGET CONTRIBUTION

1. THE FOLKETING (PARLIAMENT) MARKETS COMMITTEE DECIDED
NOVEMBER 20 TO WITHHOLD DANISH SUPPORT FOR DIRECT ELECTIONS
TO THE EC PARLIAMENT. IN COMMENTING ON THIS DECISION,
WHICH WILL ALMOST ASSUREDLY BE ENDORSED BY THE FOLKETING
AS A WHOLE, MARKETS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ARNE CHRISTIANSEN
TOLD POLCOUNS THAT THIS WAS AN ISSUE THE GOVERNING LIBERAL
PARTY, WHICH FAVORS DIRECT ELECTIONS, DID NOT WANT A FIGHT
OVER AT THIS TIME.

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2. CHRISTIANSEN SAID THAT BY ADHERING TO THE TREATY OF ROME, DENMARK IN PRINCIPLE SUBSCRIBED TO THE DIRECT ELECTION OF THE EC PARLIAMENTARIANS. THE QUESTION, HOWEVER, MUST BE "STUDIED" AS TO TIMING, METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION, ETC. HE THOUGHT A MOVE TO DIRECT ELECTIONS AT THIS TIME WOULD BE PREMATURE FROM THE DANISH POINT OF VIEW SINCE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS WITHIN THE COUNTRY DO NOT WISH CLOSER POLITICAL ASSOCIATION WITH THE EC. THESE INCLUDE PART OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, WHOSE SUPPORT ON THIS ISSUE IS CRITICAL.

3. POLCOUNS ASKED ABOUT PRESS REPORTS THAT DENMARK WAS PREPARED TO EXERCISE ITS VETO AT THE DECEMBER SUMMIT TO PREVENT AN AFFIRMATIVE DECISION ON DIRECT ELECTIONS. CHRISTIANSEN REPLIED THAT THE STORIES WERE OVERDRAWN. IN FACT, THE DANES DO NOT EXPECT TO ENCOUNTER IRRESISTIBLE PRESSURE IN PARIS ON THIS ISSUE. FURTHERMORE, HE SAID, THERE WAS THE INTERESTING, BUT PROBABLY MOOT, PROCEDURAL QUESTION WHETHER THE RENOWNED LUXEMBOURG AGREEMENT WOULD EXTEND TO A HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING.

4. CHRISTIANSEN ALSO CONFIRMED REPORTS OF DENMARK'S WILLINGNESS TO INCREASE ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMON MARKET BUDGET AS AN OFF-SET TO A DIMINISHED ASSESSMENT FOR THE UK. SUCH AN INCREASE WOULD HAVE TO BE SHARED AMONG ALL OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITIES AND HE CALCULATED ON THAT BASIS DENMARK'S CONTRIBUTION WOULD GO UP FROM 2.4 PER CENT TO ABOUT 2.7 PER CENT.

5. COMMENT: GIVEN THE TOUGH ECONOMIC PROBLEMS THAT REQUIRE PARLIAMENTARY DECISION AS WELL AS THE SIZE OF THE LIBERALS' PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION (22 OF 179), THE POSITION OF THE HARTLING GOVERNMENT ON DIRECT EC PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IS PROBABLY A WISE ONE. THERE WILL BE LITTLE DOMESTIC OPPOSITION, ON THE OTHER HAND, TO THE SLIGHT INCREASE IN DANISH CONTRIBUTION TO THE EC MEMBERSHIP EXISTS IN DENMARK, ITS POLITICAL LEADERS RECOGNIZE THE LARGE ECONOMIC BENEFITS THE COUNTRY HAS GAINED BY MEMBERSHIP. THEY ARE ALSO SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSED BY THE MODESTY OF THE DANISH EC BUDGETARY CONTRIBUTION.
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